

TRIBUTE TO YONG-SOO LEE

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Yong-Soo Lee, a South Korean woman who, decades after enduring torture and abuse by the Japanese Imperial Army, has taken it upon herself to stand up for human rights and the dignity of all by telling her personal story and demanding that the Government of Japan acknowledge and apologize for its role in the "comfort women" system of World War II.

Yong-Soo Lee is one of over 200,000 "comfort women" in Asia who suffered unimaginable dehumanization by the Japanese Imperial Army during Japan's colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II.

These women—who came from China, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, and elsewhere—suffered experiences which were unprecedented in cruelty and were officially commissioned by the Government of Japan. They endured gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation, and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death, or eventual suicide—and to this date, they have still not received justice from this tragedy.

The hope of Yong-Soo Lee and her sisters is a modest one: Simply stated, that the government of Japan acknowledges, apologizes for, and accepts full historical responsibility for these atrocities.

Yong-Soo Lee has a poignant story to tell. At 16, she was taken far from her home in Korea to an outpost on Taiwan, where she and her schoolmates, among others, were forced to provide sexual services to Japanese soldiers and airmen in the waning days of World War II. She suffered seasickness, sleeplessness, hunger, venereal disease, and bodily harm.

When she was able to return home after the war, the pain and shame were so much that she was never able to marry, which caused conflict and ostracization within her family.

Still, she went on with her life, and in 1992 began to unburden herself of her memories. Working with the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, she came forward with her story—which she had kept secret from her family for almost five decades—in order that other women will not have to endure the same sort of suffering.

Madam Speaker, on February 15, the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment of the Committee on Foreign Affairs will convene a hearing entitled "Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women." Yong-Soo Lee has been invited to share her story with members of the subcommittee along with other surviving comfort women who want to see justice prevail.

On January 31, I, along with several of my colleagues, introduced H. Res. 121, which expresses "the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual

slavery, known to the world as "comfort women" during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II."

We appreciate the dedication of women like Yong-Soo Lee, who are traveling thousands of miles to be with us in Washington, to help us better understand their personal experiences and to help us formulate appropriate policy responses to both historical events and their modern equivalents. They stand as beacons of inspiration to us as we combat human rights violations and seek to extirpate war crimes wherever they might occur. By telling their stories, Yong-Soo Lee and her fellow comfort women provide the foundation for the protection of the rights of women throughout the world.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in tribute to Yong-Soo Lee and the thousands of surviving comfort women.

COMMISSION TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL CREATION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN LATINO ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 512, to establish the commission to study the potential creation of the National Museum of the American Latino to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, and for other purposes.

Here in our Nation's Capitol we are proud of the history from the past that surrounds us and embrace the history that is made each and every day. Amongst the many museums that pay tribute to our rich history as a nation, there still remains a sense of incompleteness in our lessons of our history, art and culture. Even though 40 million United States residents share the Latino heritage and culture, hardly any permanent exhibits in Washington's museums commemorate their cultural contributions. I commend Representative BECERRA for recognizing the need to share the collective history of Latino-Americans and to ensure that their stories, cultural contributions and heritage are not forgotten for generations to come.

This bipartisan bill was first introduced as H.R. 2134 during the 109th Congress and passed by a unanimous vote but time ran out before the Senate could act on the bill. I was a co-sponsor of H.R. 2134 and it is my sincere hope that my colleagues in the Senate will take quick action and speedily move this important legislation forward upon its passage in the House. This legislation recognizes the need for detailed and careful planning and proposes a 23 member commission to discuss the museum's vitality and is charged with producing a national conference to bring stakeholders, experts, policy makers and other interested parties together. It is important to take the chief ideas discussed and move them from concept to reality; the commission would be tasked with designing a fundraising plan to create an extensive public-private partnership

as well as reporting to Congress a detailed recommended plan of action on how to do so.

Again, I thank my colleague, Mr. BECERRA, for introducing this important legislation, to ensure that we celebrate, commemorate and remember the contribution of Latino Americans by moving to establish a National museum and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

HONORING MRS. EDITH EDNA
"BETTY" VAUGHN

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Edith Edna "Betty" Vaughn for a lifetime of service as a health care professional.

Born Edith Edna Lunn on November 3, 1945, Betty, as she later preferred to be called, was the only girl of her parents' four children. She became interested in nursing and health care at an early age, often having to look after her brothers. Betty decided to turn this interest into a career when she attended nursing school in 1963. She graduated in 1967 with a diploma of nursing from the University of Essex in England.

Betty met her husband, Victor Vaughn, at a hospital dance and married him 1 year later. The Vaughns moved to Richmond, VA, where Betty began her career at the Johnston-Willis Hospital.

In 1974 the Vaughns moved to Blacksburg, VA, where Victor attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Betty continued her career of service working at the local community hospital. Mrs. Vaughn was a dedicated professional during the days and a loving, supportive wife to her husband at night.

Upon completion of Mr. Vaughn's education, the family moved to northern Virginia where Betty joined the staff at Fairfax Hospital, today known as INOVA Fairfax Hospital. Betty has been a cheerful, positive employee to the hospital, spreading joy to all patients she encounters. While her retirement is well deserved, she will be greatly missed.

Madam Speaker, in closing I would like to commend Mrs. Edith Edna "Betty" Vaughn for her lifetime of service. I call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding Betty for her past accomplishments and in wishing her a happy and healthy retirement.

TRIBUTE TO JAN RUFF-O'HERNE

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor an extraordinary woman of courage and integrity who is visiting Washington this week.

During World War II, Jan Ruff-O'Herne was a young Dutch national, born and raised in what is now Indonesia. She was kidnapped by Japanese Imperial forces and forced to serve as what is euphemistically known as a "comfort woman" in a brothel for the entertainment of Japanese soldiers.